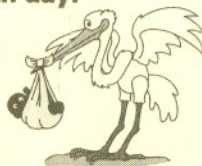


To make the day pass more quickly, organize and structure each day:

- ♥ Wake up with your family.
- ♥ Change clothes, even if only putting on different sleep clothes.
- ♥ Talk with your doctor about whether or not you can shower, bathe or use the bathroom.
- ♥ Comb your hair, put on make-up if you usually wear it.
- ♥ Eat 3 balanced meals and at least one healthy snack at regular times.
- ♥ Schedule a variety of activities to do while resting i.e., reading, puzzles, TV etc.
- ♥ It may be hard to concentrate. Keep activities short. Keep a journal or diary.



When family or friends call, let them help you. They could:

- ♥ Bring a meal.
- ♥ Grocery shop. Do laundry. Water plants. Run errands.
- ♥ Take an older child on an outing.
- ♥ Visit with you so your family can have a night away.



the monitor helps you to identify contractions you may not be aware of. On the other hand, if you are feeling something that the monitor is not picking up, you need to let the nurse know.

NON-STRESS TEST

The non-stress test uses the fetal monitor to evaluate the well-being of the baby.

The baby's heart rate is observed while the baby moves and sleeps.



A healthy baby can speed up its heart rate in response to movement or other stimuli, such as noise. Fetal movement with a rise in the baby's heart rate is a good sign. You will be asked to lie on your side or in a semi-sitting position during the test. A non-stress test usually takes about ½ hour and you can eat or drink as usual before the test. This test is a painless procedure that can be done in the doctor's office or in the hospital.

ULTRASOUND

The ultrasound measures your baby's well being. It is a simple and painless procedure which uses high-frequency sound waves to determine the position of the baby and placenta, the age and size of the baby, certain abnormalities, and multiple births. You may need to have a partial or full bladder for the ultrasound. After you lie down on an exam table or bed, a thick gel will be spread over your abdomen. The person doing the ultrasound will then slowly move a flat hand-held instrument (transducer) over your abdomen. There are no known harmful effects to mom or baby. During the ultrasound profile, the doctor or technician measures the amount of fluid around the baby, assesses the baby's muscle tone, body movements and breathing movements.

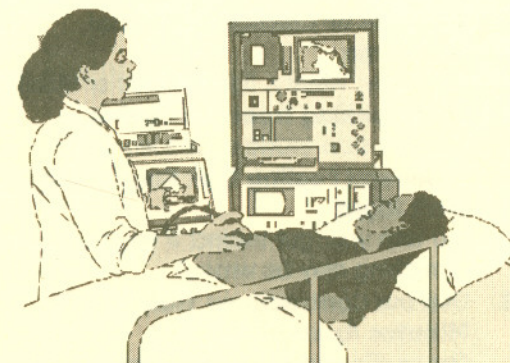


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04/04

Help Your Baby By Learning About The Warning Signs of Preterm Labor



South Dakota
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

COMMON TESTS

FETAL MONITORING

The fetal monitor is an instrument that can be used to monitor your contractions and your baby's heart rate. Some doctors may have these available in their office, or you may need to go to the hospital. Two transducers (sensors) are placed on your abdomen with elastic belts. One monitors your baby's heart rate, and the other detects your contractions. Sometimes



Preterm labor can happen from the fifth month on. It happens when the womb (uterus) has tightenings that may make the mouth of the womb (cervix) open and the baby may be born too small and too soon. Pre-term labor can be stopped most of the time **IF IT IS CAUGHT EARLY**. If you have any of the following warning signs, contact your doctor immediately.

1. **Menstrual-like Cramps**
(constant or come and go, located just above the pubic bone)
2. **Low, Dull Backache**
(constant or comes and goes)
3. **Pressure**
(feels like the baby is pushing down; feels heavy)
4. **Abdominal Cramping**
(may or may not have diarrhea, located around the belly-button area)
5. **Increase or Change in Vaginal Discharge**
(mucousy, watery, light-colored or bloody)
6. **Fluid Leaking from the Vagina**
(may be slow trickle or sudden gush)
7. **A General Feeling that Something Isn't Right**
(go with your gut instinct if you think something may be wrong)
8. **Uterine Contractions That are 10 Minutes Apart or Closer (or as directed by your doctor)**
(sometimes described as feeling like "baby is balling up" – may be painless)

FEELING FOR CONTRACTIONS

It takes some practice to feel your contractions, so lie down and check for contractions every day. Lie down with a pillow behind your back so that you are tipped to your left side. **DO NOT LIE FLAT ON YOUR BACK**. Lying on your left side improves the blood flow to your baby and helps relax the uterus.

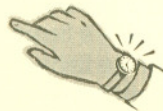
Place your hands on each side of your lower abdomen below the belly button. If your uterus feels firm to the touch you are having a contrac-

tion. You should be able to easily "indent" it or push it with your fingers when the contraction is done. Time the contractions from the beginning of one to the beginning of the next one.

It is normal to have a few contractions when changing positions or climbing stairs.

IF YOU ARE HAVING 5 CONTRACTIONS OR MORE AN HOUR AND/OR ANY WARNING SIGNS

- ♥ Empty your bladder
 - ♥ Lie down on your left side.
- DO NOT LIE FLAT ON YOUR BACK.**
- ♥ Time your contractions from the beginning of one to the beginning of the next.
 - ♥ Drink several glasses of water.



REMEMBER

- ♥ More than 5 uterine contractions per hour can cause the cervix to open.
- ♥ Do not wait longer than 30 minutes for any of the warning signs to go away. CALL YOUR PHYSICIAN.
- ♥ There is medication available to stop preterm contractions **if you call early**.

BEDREST



Your doctor may decide that you should be placed on bedrest for a portion or the rest of your pregnancy. The kind of bedrest you need depends on your personal situation. You will want to ask your doctor what activities you may still do including: Can I work outside the home? Can I do any housework? Can I sit up or do I need to lay down all the time? Can I shower and use the bathroom? Can I take care of my children? How much can I lift? Can I have sexual relations? Can I drive?

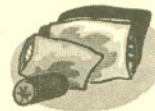
SOME TIPS IF YOUR DOCTOR WOULD PLACE YOU ON BEDREST

Being told that you need to stay in bed, even if it is for a short time, can come as a shock.

Knowing that you may have to stay in bed for weeks or even months may seem impossible. Here are some suggestions to help make your stay in bed more manageable.

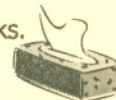
These things will make your bed more comfortable:

- ♥ A foam support to lean against while you are lying on your side.
- ♥ A wedge or pillow chair to sit up for your meals.
- ♥ Extra pillows: one for between your knees, another for under your stomach when you are lying on your side.



These things will make it easier to stay in bed:

- ♥ A bell so you don't have to shout for family members.
- ♥ A telephone and telephone book.
- ♥ A water pitcher or thermos and flexi-straws so you can drink lying on your side.
- ♥ A small cooler for lunch or snacks.
- ♥ Tissues and cleansing wipes.
- ♥ Toiletries, such as hair brush, comb, mirror, nail file, scissors, lotion, etc.
- ♥ A table, cart, or ironing board next to your bed to hold all of these items.



These items will help you to pass the time:

- ♥ A TV with remote control; radio, cassette or CD player.
- ♥ Reading materials: newspaper, magazines, books, journals, catalogues, puzzle books.
- ♥ Small craft projects: knitting, crocheting, embroidery, needlepoint, etc.
- ♥ A hard writing surface such as a clipboard; paper and pens.

